



# MARYLAND FAMILY NETWORK

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## CHAMPIONING EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION IN THE 2026 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This document outlines Maryland Family Network's policy positions and the final status of various bills during the 2026 Maryland General Assembly session. It serves as a report card on legislative efforts related to early childhood care, education, and family support services in the state. For questions, contact [publicpolicy@marylandfamilynetwork.org](mailto:publicpolicy@marylandfamilynetwork.org).

### MFN'S Policy Positions in the 2026 Maryland General Assembly Session as of April 21, 2026.

Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 6 / SB 420	Public Institutions of Higher Education - Pregnant and Parenting Students - Plan and Reporting	Monitor	Requiring the Maryland Higher Education Commission to collect certain data regarding the parental status of students from each public institution of higher education in the State; requiring all public institutions of higher education to adopt a certain plan for pregnant and parenting students and post the plan on the institution's website by October 1, 2026; and altering the definition of 'student data' to authorize the Commission to share data related to certain students' parental status with the Maryland Longitudinal Data System.	Passed
HB 281	Family Law - Child Care Providers - Criminal Background Investigations	Monitor	Altering provisions relating to criminal background investigations for certain individuals who care for or supervise children; requiring certain facilities to apply to the Criminal Justice Information System Central Repository for a national and State criminal history records check for each employee, employer, individual, or volunteer; and altering provisions relating to the process under which a certain State or local law enforcement agency conducts a certain name-based check on certain individuals.	Passed
HB 363 / SB 468	Local Government - Grant for Recipients of State Child Tax Credit - Authorization	Favorable	Authorizing a county to provide, by law, a grant to recipients of the State income tax credit for certain dependent children, subject to certain limitations.	Passed
HB 430	Family Child Care Providers - Reserve Component Members - Substitute Provider	Monitor	Requiring a family child care provider who is a member of a military reserve component to designate a substitute to provide family child care for not more than 45 working days in any 12-month period while the family child care provider is absent for required training and active service.	Passed



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 561 / SB 467	Maryland Child Care Credential Program - Extension of Funding	Favorable	Requiring the Governor, beginning in fiscal year 2028, to appropriate each year to the Maryland Child Care Credential Program an amount that is at least equal to the amount appropriated in fiscal year 2024.	Passed
HB 635 / SB 359	Child Care Facilities - Criminal History Records Check - Requirement	Favorable	Requiring individuals who will have direct contact with children in certain child care facilities to submit to a criminal history records check; requiring the State Department of Education to establish a centralized unit for the processing and management of information about criminal history records checks; requiring the Department to submit a report to the General Assembly by October 1, 2028, related to its review of the process for background checks.	Passed
HB 680 / SB 668	Children's Cabinet Fund - Renaming and Funding for Grants to Local Management Boards	Monitor	Renaming the Children's Cabinet Fund to be the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund; and requiring the Governor, for fiscal years 2028 through 2031, to include an appropriation in the annual budget bill to the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund to be used for grants to the local management boards.	Passed
HB 735 / SB 519	Earned Income Tax Credit - Assistance Program Implementation Delay and Study	Monitor	Delaying the implementation of the Earned Income Tax Credit Assistance Program until taxable year 2030; requiring the Comptroller's Office, on or before December 1, 2026, to study and make recommendations regarding outreach efforts to encourage eligible taxpayers to claim the State earned income tax credit; and requiring the Department of Service and Civic Innovation to make certain recommendations concerning methods to assist low-income Marylanders with claiming certain credits and obtaining certain assistance.	Passed
HB 742 / SB 503	Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Program - Funding	Favorable	Requiring the Governor to include an appropriation of \$450,000 in the annual budget bill for the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Program for fiscal years 2028 through 2030.	Passed



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 748	Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Early Childhood Educator Career Ladder for Private Providers - New Pathways	Monitor	Adding new pathways to the early childhood career ladder for eligible private prekindergarten providers that allow educators to meet certain experiential and educational qualifications within certain periods of time.	Passed
HB 849	Child Care Scholarship Program - Freeze in Enrollment - Exceptions and Waitlist	Informational	Prohibiting a freeze in enrollment in the Child Care Scholarship Program from including certain individuals enrolled in certain governmental support programs, children with siblings enrolled in the Program, and children who are homeless; requiring the State Department of Education to establish a waitlist for the Program under certain conditions; requiring the Department to vie priority for enrollment in the Program to certain individuals on the waitlist; requiring a new application for the program.	Passed
HB 898 / SB 388	Economic Development - Delivering Economic Competitiveness and Advancing Development Efforts (DECADE) Act	Monitor	Altering the designation, administration, and purposes of and eligibility for certain economic development programs.	Passed
HB 1118 / SB 891	Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations - Perinatal Behavioral Health Conditions	Favorable	Requiring certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to provide coverage for screening for perinatal health conditions at certain times; requiring certain health care providers to screen for perinatal behavioral health conditions; requiring the Maryland Department of Health to identify certain screening tools and to assist certain health care providers with accessing resources and referral services related to screening for perinatal behavioral health conditions.	Passed



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 1280 / SB 809	Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program - Feasibility Study	Monitor	Requiring the University of Maryland, College Park, with assistance from the Department of Human Services, to conduct a feasibility study for establishing and operating the Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program; and requiring the University of Maryland, College Park, to submit a final report of its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to certain committees of the General Assembly by July 1, 2028.	Passed
HB 1321	Child Care Scholarship Program - Application Process and Copays - Alterations	Informational	Requiring the State Department of Education to identify, inform, and assist Child Care Scholarship Program applicants who qualify for enrollment in publicly funded prekindergarten, Head Start, and Early Head Start subject to certain conditions; requiring the process for identifying and assisting eligible applicants whose children qualify for a program to continue as long as the waitlist is in effect; and limiting certain copays for certain individuals under the Program.	Passed
HB 1326 / SB 447	Child Abuse and Neglect - Disclosure of Reports and Records	Monitor	Expanding the circumstances under which a report or record concerning child abuse or neglect may be disclosed by the Department of Human Services to include the administrator of a certain child care center, the coach, team administrator, or manager of a certain youth sports program, and the administrator or other appropriate personnel of any organization that provides adult supervision or care and control of children.	Passed
HB 1490	Family Investment Program - Temporary Cash Assistance - Good Cause and Adequate Reason Exceptions	Favorable	Prohibiting the Department of Human Services from denying an application or reducing or terminating temporary cash assistance from an individual if the individual has good cause or an adequate reason for noncooperation with child support; defining 'good cause' as circumstances in which cooperation with child support may be against the best interest of the child; requiring the Family Investment Program to determine that there is good cause for noncooperation with child support using certain criteria.	Passed



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
SB 282 / HB 390	Budget Bill (Fiscal Year 2027)	Favorable with Amendments	Making the proposed appropriations contained in the State Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027.	Passed
SB 284 / HB 392	Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2026	Monitor	Altering or repealing certain required appropriations; authorizing the use of certain funds for certain purposes; and authorizing, requiring, or altering the distribution of certain revenue.	Passed
SB 311 / HB 490	Education - The Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Revisions	Monitor	Extending the time period during which a certain method is used to calculate compensatory education enrollment through fiscal year 2027; repealing a termination date for the use of funds under the Concentration of Poverty Grant Program for the purpose of providing certain programs; altering the qualifications for an initial teacher certificate; and requiring the State Department of Education to suspend operation of the Expert Review Team Program during the 2026-2027 school year.	Passed
SB 461	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Heat and Eat Program - Study	Monitor	Altering the eligibility requirements for the Heat and Eat Program within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in the Department of Human Services to require a household to include an elderly or disabled individual.	Passed



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 29 / SB 343	Public High Schools - Post College and Career Readiness Pathways - Alterations	Monitor	Authorizing a county board of education to develop and establish income eligibility guidelines and procedures for payment of costs for a post college and career readiness (post-CCR) pathway, except under certain circumstances; extending the time period to 2030 during which the State Board and the Accountability and Implementation Board may limit the number and types of dual enrollment as a post college and career readiness pathway.	Died
HB 64 / SB 170	Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth	Monitor	Establishing the Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth to analyze the challenges related to the delay in student enrollment counts and its effect on school funding and the connection between growing student populations and the provision of school funding; and requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 15, 2026.	Died
HB 122	State Aid - Nonprofits - Status	Monitor	Prohibiting a unit of State government or other State entity that provides State aid from providing State aid to a nonprofit entity unless the nonprofit is current with certain obligations under federal, State, and local law.	Died
HB 196 / SB 570	Public Health - Baby Food Testing and Labeling - Requirements	Monitor	Altering the definition of 'baby food' for purposes of certain provisions of law governing baby food testing to include infant cereal.	Died
HB 536	Employment Discrimination - Reasonable Accommodations - Disabilities Due to Childbirth, Menopause, and Related Medical Conditions	Monitor	Expanding certain protections against employment discrimination to apply to temporary disabilities caused or contributed to by childbirth, menopause, or a related medical condition; and authorizing an employer to consider the operational impact of any staffing gap in determining an undue burden imposed by a certain transfer request by an employee.	Died



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 539	Child Care Centers - Teacher Qualifications - Alterations	Favorable	Requiring the State Board of Education to provide a pathway for individuals who are qualified to be child care teachers, but lack proof of necessary educational attainment, to attest to qualifying educational credentials to be a child care teacher teaching in a child care center.	Died
HB 542 / SB 377	Earned Income Tax Credit - Individuals Without Qualifying Children - Eligibility	Monitor	Expanding eligibility for the Maryland earned income tax credit for individuals without qualifying children by altering the income thresholds at which the credit phases out; providing that, after the 2025 tax year, the income threshold and phase-out amounts are adjusted annually for inflation; and applying the Act to all taxable years beginning after December 31, 2025.	Died
HB 543	Real Property - Landlord and Tenant - Family Child Care Homes	Favorable	Authorizing a landlord to impose an increased security deposit if a tenant operates or plans to operate a family child care home on the leased premises and prohibiting a landlord of certain residential rental property from prohibiting or unreasonably limiting the operation of a family child care home on the property.	Died
HB 592	Task Force to Study Forced Infant Separation From Incarcerated Individuals	Monitor	Establishing the Task Force to Study Forced Infant Separation From Incarcerated Individuals to study and make recommendations regarding methods to reduce forced infant separation in the State and facilitate bonds between postpartum incarcerated individuals and their children.	Died
HB 659	State Board of Education - Membership - Early Childhood Development Professional	Monitor	Altering the membership of the State Board of Education to include, as a member, an early childhood development professional with extensive experience in the operations of a child care business and early childhood curriculum and development; and requiring the Governor to appoint the early childhood development member, with the advice and consent of the Senate, from a list of three qualified individuals submitted from the Office of Child Care Advisory Council.	Died
HB 704 / SB 586	Community Eligibility Provision Expansion Program - Establishment	Monitor	Establishing the Community Eligibility Provision Expansion Program in the State Department of Education to provide funding to eligible schools that participate in the federal community eligibility provision of the child nutrition programs; requiring schools that opt out of the Community Eligibility Provision of the Child Nutrition Program to include certain information in a certain report; and requiring the Governor in fiscal year 2028 and succeeding years to include \$10,000,000 in the annual budget bill for the Program.	Died



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 724	Employment Discrimination - Caregiver Status	Monitor	Prohibiting employment discrimination based on an individual's caregiver status.	Died
HB 800	Education - Behavioral Health and Student Well-Being and Human Flourishing (Maryland Student Well-Being and Flourishing Act)	Monitor	Updating certain provisions of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future that refer to 'behavioral health' to be inclusive of 'student well-being and human flourishing'; and amending the purposes, membership, and duties of the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports to include the furtherance of student well-being and human flourishing.	Died
HB 930	Income Tax – Decoupling From Federal Changes – Education Expenses	Monitor	Prohibiting the Governor from electing to participate in a certain tax credit program for certain elementary and secondary education scholarships.	Died
HB 1032 / SB 659	Prekindergarten Programs and Primary and Secondary Schools - Student Privacy Policy Requirements and Discrimination Reporting	Monitor	Requiring public and nonpublic primary and secondary schools to adopt certain written student privacy policies and procedures; requiring nonpublic prekindergarten programs and nonpublic primary and secondary schools, beginning September 1, 2027, to report the number of incidents of alleged discrimination to the State Department of Education annually.	Died
HB 1034	Child Care - Child Abuse and Neglect - Training Requirements	Monitor	Requiring a child care providers in registered family child care homes and registered large family child care homes and licensees and staff of a child care center to complete training on the detection and reporting of child abuse at certain intervals.	Died
HB 1245	Baltimore First Responders Child Care Support and Accessibility Program - Establishment	Informational	Establishing the Baltimore First Responders Child Care Support and Accessibility Program within the State Department of Education's Office of Child Care to support and expand a pilot program in Baltimore City that provides monthly child care allowances to first responders to access quality child care that aligns with the demands of a career in public safety; requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$600,000 to the Program in fiscal year 2028 and each fiscal year thereafter.	Died



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 1259	Zoning Authorities - Operation of Family Child Care Homes - Prohibitions and Requirements	Favorable	Prohibiting a local jurisdiction in the State from denying or restricting the operation of certain family child care homes if the family child care home meets the licensing requirements established by the State Department of Education; and requiring a local jurisdiction to designate the operation of certain family child care homes as a residential activity and as a permitted use.	Died
HB 1261	Consumer Protection - Artificial Intelligence Toys (Artificial Intelligence Toy Safety Act)	Monitor	Establishing certain child safety and data privacy requirements for certain toys featuring artificial intelligence.	Died
HB 1373	State Department of Education - Independent Regulatory Framework for After School and Out of School Time Child Care Programs - Study	Monitor	Requiring the State Department of Education to study and make recommendations on establishing an independent regulatory framework for after school and out of school time child care programs; and requiring the Department to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to certain committees of the General Assembly by December 1, 2026.	Died
HB 1396	Commission on Blueprint Fiscal Sustainability and Student Achievement - Establishment	Monitor	Establishing the Commission on Blueprint Fiscal Sustainability and Student Achievement to study and make recommendations on the successful and sustainable implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future; and requiring the Commission to provide an interim report on or before December 31, 2026, and a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2027.	Died
HB 1451 / SB 485	Public Health - Women's Health Care Data - Report	Monitor	Requiring the Maryland Department of Health to develop and implement a standard system to collect and compile annual data on the costs of prenatal care, birth, postpartum care, pregnancy care, abortion services, and menopausal care in the State.	Died



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 1555	Education - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Oversight Requirements	Monitor	Altering the length of the term of the members of the Accountability and Implementation Board; authorizing a public school or local school system to appeal to the Office of Administrative Hearings after receiving a decision by the Accountability and Implementation Board to withhold certain funds after a certain appeals process; establishing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Stakeholder Advisory Council and the Joint Oversight Committee on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.	Died
HB 1574	Child Care Providers - Licensing and Registration Alterations	Monitor	Requiring the State Department of Education to alter child care regulations in certain cases, such as to allow the issuance of a warning to child care providers for certain violations of a rule or regulation adopted by the Department within a certain period of time.	Died
SB 348	Hospitals and Freestanding Birthing Centers-High- Risk Pregnancies- Communication After Discharge	Monitor	Altering the requirement that a hospital or freestanding birthing center contact the birth parent after the delivery of a newborn following a high-risk pregnancy to evaluate the birthing parent's status and, as necessary, provide certain information to be at least 24 hours after discharge.	Died
SB 664 / HB 910	Child Care Scholarship Program - Priority for Child Care Providers	Monitor	Requiring the State Department of Education to establish a framework, for applications received after July 1, 2026, to prioritize the children of individuals who provide care for children in licensed child care centers, registered family child care homes, and registered large family child care homes for scholarships under the Child Care Scholarship Program.	Died



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
SB 672	Prince George's County - Expanding Access to Early Childhood Education and Child Care	Monitor	Requiring the Prince George's County government to develop an implementation and financing plan to expand access to high-quality early childhood education and child care in Prince George's County for children from birth through 3 years; requiring the county government to consult with certain entities; and requiring the plan to include certain analyses.	Died

### MFN'S Policy Positions in the 2026 Maryland General Assembly Session as of April 21, 2026.

Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 129	Public Funding - Nonprofit Entities - Reporting	Monitor	Requiring a nonprofit entity that receives at least 50% of its funding each year from a grant from the State, a county, or a municipality, the State capital budget, or certain local impact grants to report certain information to the Comptroller.	Withdrawn
HB 158	Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Maternal Health Monitoring Pilot Program	Monitor	Establishing the Maternal Health Monitoring Pilot Program in the Maryland Department of Health to support pregnant and postpartum Maryland Medical Assistance Program recipients who have higher risks of pregnancy complications because of maternal hypertension or maternal diabetes.	Withdrawn
HB 574	Prince George's County Teen Pregnancy Support Program and Fee in Child Support Cases – Established PG 504–26	Monitor	Establishing the Prince George's County Teen Pregnancy Support Program to provide certain students attending a public high school in Prince George's County with certain assistance relating to child care and parenting.	Withdrawn



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Bill Number	Bill Name	Position	Summary	Final Status
HB 1458	State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Refugees and Asylees - Establishment	Favorable	Establishing the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Refugees and Asylees.	Withdrawn
HB 1487	Public Health – Baltimore City Mobile Infant and Maternal Health Pilot Program	Monitor	Establishing the Baltimore City Mobile Infant and Maternal Health Pilot Program in the Maryland Department of Health; and requiring the Secretary to consult with the Baltimore City Health Department in the development and implementation of the Program.	Withdrawn
HB 1579	State Personnel - Family and Medical Leave - Limits and Use	Monitor	Providing that an employee in the State Personnel and Management System may, without certain certification, take up to 30 days of paid family and medical leave to care for a child of the employee immediately following the birth of the employee's child or the placement of the child with the employee for adoption; and providing that family and medical leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act may not be limited to less than a certain number of weeks for certain employees in the Executive Branch.	Withdrawn